The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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AN OLD GARDEN.

The morning-glories there uncurled
Their dainty spiral buds,
And on the arbor's sunny side
Their fairy blossoms multiplied
To greet a waking world.
The prairie rose beside them twined,
A hardy pioneer,
And, prodigal for our delight,
Flung far and wide its blossoms bright,
Most lavish of its kind.

The prairie rose's kinsfolk there,
Deep crimson, creamy white,
And palest yellow, grew between
The moss-rose in its sheath of green,
And the sweet-brier fair.
The honeysuckles, pink and white,
Had flung above the path
A graceful arch, a cooling shade
For summer noons, whose fragrance made
More sweet the summer night.

The snowball bush, with subtle hint
Of winter in July,
Shone white beyond the hollyhocks,
And gleamed above the gaudy phlox
And fragrant thyme and mint.
"Ladies' delights," in purple clad,
With just a touch of gold,—
The sweet day-lily by the tree,—
The sun-fed poppies nodding free,—
Their beauty makes me glad!

For all are mine, though crowding years
Have hid them from my sight.
When winter skies are bleak and cold,
They bloom in sunshine, as of old,
Their brightness ever cheers.
The beauty of a distant day
Upon that garden lies,
And sunset light among the hills
Its fragrant paths with glory fills
That never fades away.

—*Harriet W. Forbush.*

A SHORT SERMON.

Love has three stages of growth: first and most common is the selfish love that takes; second, the unselfish love that gives; and, third, and highest of all, the sanctified love that surrenders, which in pure self-sacrifice is willing for the higher good of the loved one to forego the joy of its presence. This is the holiest form of love, and few are they who can attain to it. And yet as an earthly parting is the inevitable destiny of all human relations, as the mother must leave her child, and the husband the wife, ought we not to prepare for it in season, and, whether it come early or late, to bear it with resignation? Be it ours to show that higher love that is willing to surrender its dearest, so that He wills it, and we know it is but for a little while.

It is because this need for something to love is so universal that the Divine Providence has opened to the human heart so many channels for its affection. If you lead a loveless life therefore, it must be owing to your own selfishness and want of human sympathy.

Because your lot in life is single, because those you loved so deeply have been taken away, because your home is childless, must you therefore forego the happiness of loving? Such a thought is an impiety toward the Divine Source of all love. Love your home, then, and all the dear ones who are included in it. Yet do not let your home contract the range of your sympathies. Let

it not become the prison of your affection, but the temple wherein, by constant sacrifice and devotion, you daily dedicate yourself to the larger service of humanity. Love the brotherhood. Think how much the world needs your kindly interest. Recently I heard of a noble couple in New York State, who, although in moderate circumstances, increased their own large family by adopting and educating some fourteen of these stray waifs of city life, and all but one grew up into a respected and happy manhood and womanhood. What a wealth of love this father and this mother must have had! The Roman civilization was behind our own in many respects; but, had they lived at that day, the grateful State would have publicly honored this noble pair, and erected them statues to preserve the memory of their goodness.

Finally, through these various stages and phases of affection, let us rise to the love of God; "for he that loveth is born of God and knoweth God." The love of God that is kindled by the thought of his goodness and perfection, which feels the conscious joy of his presence and providence,—only as we have this in our hearts can we rise to an unselfish and reverential obedience, and know the happiness that comes from trust in him.

—*C. W. Wendte.*

THE STILL HOUR.

He who hath led will lead
  All through the wilderness;
He who hath fed will feed;
  He who hath blessed will bless;
He who hath heard thy cry
  Will never close his ear;
He who hath marked thy faintest sigh
  Will not forget thy tear.
He loveth always, faileth never,
  So rest on him, to-day, forever!

—*F. R. Havergal.*

THANKSGIVING FOR THE LOVE OF FRIENDS.

My heart is very full, O Lord. I would come to thy feet and speak to thee. My Father, I thank thee for the kindness of thy children to me, for their kindness so much greater than I deserve—I, so often weak and selfish. How blessed has my life been made by their kind words, their loving and tender actions! Sometimes I have toiled long alone, and have grown sad and heavy-hearted, and then, even then, a child of thine will speak to me a word of love most truly divine, and the whole long day when that word was spoken will be perfumed with sweetest odors, and my faith will grow firm in love and goodness and all possibilities of nobleness, and I shall have hope and heart, and a spirit renewed within me.

I thank thee, O dear Lord, that thou breathest such love upon us that men may so speak and act and be angels from thee to each other. I know that their love is from thee: they can love because thou art loving.—*"Alone to the Alone," F. P. Cobbe.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.*]

BEFORE WRITING TO ASK FOR BOOKS, DO NOT FAIL TO READ THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

Please write only on one side of the paper in sending lists or letters to the secretary.

OFFERS.

Will any one who would like to receive "Black Beauty" address Miss Langmaid, 71 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass.?

The following books are offered by Miss E. S. Tilden, White Street, Milton, Mass:—

Poetry.

"Queen Mary," Tennyson; "Kathrina," J. G. Holland; "Divine Tragedy," Longfellow; "Among the Trees," Bryant; Burns's Poetical Works.

Fiction.

"Woven of Many Threads"; "Saracinesca," Crawford; "Little Minister"; "Picciola."

Miscellaneous.

"Intellectual Life," Hamerton; "Christian Days and Thoughts"; "Dr. John Brown"; Life of Milton, Stopford Brooke; "Annals of a Quiet Neighborhood"; Life of Daniel Webster; "Heroes and Hero-worship," Carlyle; "Middle Ages," vols. i. ii., iii., Hallam; "Royal Bounty," Havergal; Life of Martin Luther; "Works of Charlotte Elizabeth," vols. i. ii.; "Treasury of Thought," Ballou; "From Ponkapog to Pesth," T. B. Aldrich; "Warwick and its Neighborhood"; "Christ

in Modern Life" (sermons), Stopford Brooke; "Evidences of Christianity," Bulfinch; Specimens of Early English"; Channing's Works, vols. i., ii., iii., iv.; "Half-hours with Best Authors," vols. i., ii.; Emerson's Prose Works; "Among my Books," Lowell; "The Ancient City," De Coulanges; "Progress of Religious Ideas"; "Religion of Israel," Crawford H. Toy; Life of Webster; "Ministry of the Spirit," A. J. Gordon; "Revere Memorial"; "Life of Anna Jameson; "Life of T. J. Mumford"; "Heavenly Blessedness"; "Fellowship"; "Development," Bergen; "Young America Abroad"; "Stories about London"; "Uncle Curioso Tales"; "White Elephant"; "Tanglewood Tales," Hawthorne; "Book of Golden Deeds"; Peter Parley's Own Story"; "Edged Tools"; "Cathedrals of the Old World"; "Life in the Sick Room," Harriet Martineau; "Poems and Hymns"; "Hymns and Tunes for Sunday-school"; "He can Conquer Who Thinks he Can"; "Voyages and Ventures of a Sailor's Life"; Johnson's and Walker's Dictionary, 1833; "Romeo and Juliet."

Educational.

"Arithmetical Problems"; "Geometry for Beginners"; Wheeler's "Trigonometry"; "Elements of Logarithms"; "Elements of Physics"; "Southern Colonies"; "History of Rome"; "Handbook of Nature" (animals), Hooker; "Handbook of Conversation"; "Handbook of Synonyms"; Cushing's "Manual of Form and Law"; "Botany for Young People," Gray; "Handbook of Poetics," Gummere; German and English Dictionary; Text-books of Greek, Latin, German and French.

A barrel of magazines is offered to any one paying freight on same by Mrs. George E. Trimble, 123 Chambers Street, Newburgh, N.Y., Mrs. F. A. Stearns, 36 Harris Street, Waltham, Mass., and Miss Sara E. Fox, Cohasset, Mass.

Mrs. George W. Thacher, 18 Concord Square, Boston, Mass., offers the following books: Poems, William Bennett, London, 1850; Poems, John Sterling; "Hymns of Praise and Prayer," compiled by James Martineau; and copies of the *Cheerful Letter* previous to 1902.

REQUESTS.

[*Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.*]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club Secretary.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. I am a little girl who has no mother, and would like to get some good books, especially, "Alice in Wonderland," "Grandmother Lee's Portfolio," "The Waterbabies," "Five Little Peppers." Alma Hamilton, R. F. D. No. 19, Winder, Georgia.

2. Mr. John Crow, Tahlequah, Indian Territory, will be glad of good reading.

3. Many thanks for the literature received in the past, and will be glad to have more. A friend of mine desires to have reading matter, as she is in delicate health and confined at home, lives in the country. She will be glad to receive magazines. She is hungering for literature of any kind. Her address is Mrs. Ella Pinkston, Wadesboro, North Carolina. I will be glad to have reading matter for myself or children. Mrs. Hermie Sullivan, Cordova, North Carolina.

4. I wish to thank the many friends who have sent me reading and picture-books for my little boy. I have written to almost every one who sent things; but I want to write my thanks, that all may know that I have found much pleasure in their kindness toward me, and I have enjoyed the letters I have received so much. I now request current numbers of the *Delineator* and any books for my little boy, who is just learning to read. Mrs. Sue Harper Turbyfill, Linden, Cleveland County, Oklahoma Territory.

5. Please send me an occasional paper or magazine. J. A. Driscoll, Yakima County, Zillah, Wash.

6. Mrs. R. H. Cook, 927 Vance Street, Greensboro, North Carolina, writes: "I have

three children, one boy and two girls, who enjoy reading so much,—boy fourteen years old and girls nine and twelve respectively. My husband is a telegraph operator. I would be glad to secure a correspondent for each, they would enjoy it so much, and I believe would improve them so much in many ways, and I will appreciate any suggestions you may make. We have practically nothing to read that I care for the children to read; and, if the following books can be had, we will appreciate them so much and will circulate them among my neighbors: "Black Beauty," "Uncle Tom's Cabin," Hart's "Composition and Rhetoric," "The Heart of a Boy," "The Life that Now Is" (sermons by Robert Collyer), "Frederick the Great, and his Court," "Reason in Religion" (Dr. Hedge), "Fifty Famous Stories Retold," "The Children's Bible Picture-book," "Little Men," "Nature Stories for Young Readers," "How Ben Franklin made his Mark." We have a little Sunday-school numbering seventy-five to one hundred in our little mission church in suburbs of Greensboro, and sorely need a Sunday-school library for the benefit of our school, but are not able to purchase the needed books. Could it not be arranged to make us a donation of such books as would answer our purpose? We have about thirty-five members in our little church, all of whom have to struggle for a living, and hence our inability to purchase a library, and any aid in this direction will be highly appreciated. It is for the children's sake, whom we wish to capture for the church and for Jesus."

7. Rev. W. R. Davis, Faith, North Carolina, asks for "The Training of the Twelve," by A. B. Bruce, and "The Treasury of David," by C. H. Spurgeon.

8. Will you kindly send us occasionally some literary magazines? B. M. Lee, P. M. Milton, Arizona.

9. Charlotte Sharp, Tahlequah, Indian Territory, will appreciate any reading.

10. Having been accepted as a member of the Cheerful Letter Society, I would be very glad to receive some magazines or literature of any kind, as I am very fond of reading. I live in a very quiet country and do not have much literature. I will appreciate anything you send. Mrs. Josephine H. Merriman, Rustburg, Campbell County, Virginia.

11. Will the person in Sturgis, South Dakota, who is corresponding with Mrs. Hattie D. Wood, Mannsville, Indian Territory, please send her address to Mrs. Wood, as it has been lost?

12. "Faith Gartney's Girlhood" is asked for by Mrs. J. E. Mercer, Stockport, Ohio; Lyda K. Spaulding, Yuma, Arizona; Rev. C. F. Dykeman, Dakota, Minnesota; Lelia Moore, Moore's Mill, Virginia; A. J. Lyle, Winder, Georgia.

13. Mrs. E. P. Norton, Highlands, North Carolina, writes: "We live in a very thinly settled neighborhood, with preaching only once a month and no Sunday-school. I have five children, from fifteen to five years. I should like reading suitable for them, and 'Barriers Burned Away' (E. P. Roe), for myself."

14. Having been accepted as a member of Cheerful Letter Society, I would be glad to receive some magazines or literature. I am a member of the Methodist church at this place, having Rev. J. B. Jett as my pastor. Mrs. J. Henry Lindsay, Ervington, Virginia, R. F. D. 1.

15. Miss Annie L. Phillips, Pleasant View, Virginia, asks for current numbers of *Collier's Magazine.*

16. Mrs. Judd King, Centralia, Indian Territory, would like religious reading.

17. Mrs. Sarah B. Thornton, Filley, Nebraska, desires reading for young girls and children, and some simple sheet music for the organ. Mrs. Thornton is something of a distributing agent in Nebraska, and will be glad of good material.

18. Miss Amy Lane, Stockton Springs, Maine, is a cripple who would like reading.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

OBSTINATE CHILDREN.

The editor clips the following paragraph from another paper:—

Advice to Little Ones.

Be careful of your manners at the table. Don't think mamma's reproofs bothering, but pay strict attention to what she says,

and try to correct the faults she points out to you. You may think these are little things to write about in a paper, but little things make a great deal of trouble or pleasure often. For instance, I know a little girl who spoils many a dinner for a lady who sits next her by the way she eats, smacking her lips and taking her soup from her spoon into her mouth with as much noise as a pig makes in drinking swill. This little girl has been told about it often, but she only frowns and does the same thing next time. It is a part of a Christian's duty to be careful not to annoy other people in little things. The Bible says, "Be courteous," which means polite and thoughtful for the comfort of others.—*Dewdrops.*

The want of docility, not the bad manners, seems to have been the serious fault. But was the little girl most to blame? or was it the fault of "mamma"? Should it not be the aim of a mother to train her children in the habit of prompt obedience, which underlies everything?

It would be interesting to consider what should be done in a case like this. Would it be a good way to send the child from the table whenever she disregards her mother's advice? Some disciplinarians might take this view. Others (among them "H. H.") hold that it is never wise to mortify a child publicly by sending him or her from the table, although she has a pretty story where a mother, out of regard for her boy's feelings, dismissed him, by requesting him, in a private interview to ask to be excused. ("Come here a moment, dear, I want to speak to you," she said, and then whispered in his ear that he must ask to be excused.) "H.H." goes on to say that a child should *never* be reproved except in private. "It is a great rudeness to blame in any other way."

Never is a strong word, and it is not quite safe to use it. We shall return to this point.

Another way might be to take no notice of the disobedience at the time, but later, at a suitable moment, to say something like this:—

"Mary, dear, I am sorry to see that you find it hard to eat nicely. I am sorry, because we like to have our little girl with us at the table. If you can cure yourself of the careless tricks which well-bred persons do not like, we can always have you with us. But it is not fair to other persons to ask them to sit at table with a little girl who has not learned to eat nicely. I thought you were old enough, or that, if you sometimes forgot, you would attend to me when I reminded you. But, when I speak to you, it seems to make you feel cross, and you pay no attention to what I say. So I am afraid that I made a mistake in thinking you old enough to dine at the table. Perhaps it would be better to let you take your dinner in the nursery a little longer. Tell me when you think you are willing to be careful and have cured yourself of these disagreeable tricks."

The danger here is that a child who dines alone is not seen when she commits faults, and so loses the chance of correction; and she must be very earnest in the wish for improvement to cure them herself.

Is there some better way? And will some one who has experience suggest it?

L. F. C.

THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.

It was in consequence of his speech in the House of Commons on the subject of emigration that in July, 1848, Lord Ashley entered into one of the strangest experiences, in connection with London thieves, that ever fell to the lot of mortal man. A city missionary named Jackson, a zealous, earnest, and, in his way, gifted man, had been appointed to the Rag Fair and Rosemary Lane district, where he was known as the thieves' missionary. He was in their confidence; his house was open at all times to all those who chose to visit him in search of advice and consolation; he was acquainted, far more intimately than the police, with the habits of pickpockets, burglars, and every class of convicted or unconvicted roguery; he had the *entrée* into dens of infamy, and had familiarized himself with sin in some of its most sickening aspects; and yet he carried with him a quiet and a prayerful spirit, and became to Lord Ashley not only a guide, but also a philosopher and friend.

Soon after Lord Ashley had propounded his scheme in the House of Commons, for the emigration of young criminals, it occurred to him to ask a notorious adult thief whether he would like to avail himself of such a scheme. "I should jump at it," was the reply. Thus encouraged, he determined to have the same question propounded at one of Mr. Jackson's meetings, to which discharged criminals only were to be admitted. "It would be a capital thing for chaps like us," was their unani-

mous answer. Then one of them got up and proposed that they should write Lord Ashley a letter on behalf of themselves and all their tribe, inviting him to meet them, and give them his opinion and advice as to how they could extricate themselves from their present position. A round-robin was accordingly prepared, and was signed by forty of the most notorious thieves and burglars in London, praying him to meet them. A night was fixed, and on July 27th, Lord Ashley, without hesitation and without fear, went to the meeting. Accustomed as he was to strange sights and strange assemblies, he was not prepared for what awaited him. There, in a large room, with Jackson in the midst, were close upon four hundred men of every appearance, from the "swell-mob" in black coats and white neckcloths, to the most fierce-looking, rough, half-dressed savages he had ever seen.

The *City Mission Magazine* for August, 1848, says: "Several of the best known and most experienced thieves were stationed at the door to prevent the admission of any but thieves. Some four or five individuals, who were not at first known, were subjected to a more public examination, and only allowed to remain on their stating who they were and being recognized as members of the dishonest fraternity. The object of this care, as so many of them were in danger of 'getting into trouble,' as they call it, was to ascertain whether any who should betray them were present."

Lord Ashley was received by them with genuine enthusiasm; and, after taking the chair, the proceedings were opened with devotional exercises! A chairman, to be at ease, always like to feel the pulse of his audience, in order to know, as far as possible, what manner of men they be, and the method adopted on the occasion of which we write was striking in the extreme:—

"I was anxious to know what was the character of these thieves, some of them pickpockets, some shoplifters, others of the swell-mob, and exceedingly well-dressed some of them were. Many of them, however, had no stockings, and some of them had no shirts. I wanted to know the great departments of roguery; so the missionary said: 'His lordship wants to know the particular character of the men here. You who live by burglary and the more serious crimes will go to the right, and the others will go to the left.' About two hundred of the men at once arose and went to the right, as confessed burglars and living by the greatest crimes."

Lord Ashley then addressed them kindly, but firmly, expressing his willingness to befriend them, not only as his duty, but out of regard for them. In the first place, however, he wished to hear them speak.

A number of men then gave addresses, and anything more curious, more graphic, more picturesque, and more touching I never heard in my life. They told the whole truth without the least difficulty, and, knowing that they were there to reveal their condition, they disguised nothing.

Lord Ashley had recommended mutual aid, self-reliance, a relinquishing of their old practices, and new resolves for the future. "But how," said one of the men, "are we to live till our next meeting? We must either steal or die." It was an awkward question. Lord Ashley acknowledged that he never felt so utterly impressed with the magnitude of the task and the feebleness of the power, and confessed that, when Jackson urged them "to pray, as God would help them," he felt a certain amount of sympathy when one of the party rose and said, "My Lord and Gentlemen *of the Jury*, prayer is very good, but it won't fill an empty stomach," whereupon there arose a general response of "Hear, hear!"

One point was made clear that night. It was that the men were dissatisfied with the life they led, and would do anything to break away from it if they only knew how. One and all they were eager for the emigration scheme, and Lord Ashley promised to do all he could for them. Then one man, on behalf of the rest, exclaimed, "But will you ever come back to see us again?" "Yes," replied Lord Ashley, "at any time, at any place, whenever you shall send for me." "And," as he said when telling the story, "the low, deep murmur of gratitude was very touching." The result of that night's work, like so many in Lord Ashley's career, can never be known. One outward and visible sign, however, was the fact that within three months from that date thirteen of those who were present were starting in life afresh in Canada, while a little later on nearly three hundred had either emigrated or had passed into different employments, and had no need to return to their hateful occupation.

Among the schemes of labor that Lord Ashley set before himself for the year was, first, the stirring up of the board of health to more vigorous efforts. One hundred and

fifty wretched children had recently died of proved neglect, and "They will be the martyrs of a cause of reformation," he wrote. "Their death will be the signal, and the compulsion, too, of an improved and more merciful state of things." Next, a plan for the general subdivision of all the larger parishes for ecclesiastical purposes, so that the population of each parish should not exceed 4,000,—a plan that he felt certain would effect a greater amount of moral, social, and religious improvement than a whole code of laws. Then, the completion of Ragged School projects, especially in relation to emigration; and, finally, "the invitation to the stragglers in the lanes and streets, the evangelical coercion through the highways and hedges, according to the commands of our blessed Redeemer. Add to this the ordinary and existing work, and there is my budget!"

"*May 19th*, 1849.—Seven o'clock. Just heard that some one has fired at the Queen! She is safe. God be a million times praised for His mercy to her and to the country! The profligate George IV. passed through a life of selfishness and sin without a single *proved* attempt to take it. This mild and virtuous young woman has, four times already, been exposed to imminent peril!"

It was late in the evening of this day that Lord Ashley received a letter from Harrow which filled him with the greatest alarm and anxiety. It was to announce the serious illness of his second son, Francis. He had been at Harrow since April, 1847, where he had taken and kept a distinguished place in the school, and, at the time of which we write, was in the sixth (highest) form. He was a singularly striking character, old and thoughtful for his years, deeply religious, and pure in heart and habit. The illness with which he was seized was a severe attack of cold and inflammation, and the remedy then applied was one which would not now be even thought of,—such has been the rapid advance of medical science,—repeated bleedings.

[The natural result followed. Bleeding seems to have been the universal remedy, and was the common practice of the whole medical profession for many years. It is heart-rending to think of the valuable lives thus sacrificed before wiser methods were learned.]

For many months (after the death of Francis) there is scarcely a page of the diary that does not record the name of "my blessed Francis." His portrait, ever after his death, was on the mantelpiece in the study at St. Giles's; and thirty-six years later than the time of which we write Lord Shaftesbury declared his belief that not one day had passed without some conscious memory of his beloved son.

Although it was the first time that death had entered the family, and Lord Ashley felt stunned by the blow, he did not "sorrow as those who have no hope." Within a week of the funeral we find him busy on the Commission for the Subdivision of Parishes, and busier still in Ragged School work, for a new motive was now added.

"Work of the 'Ragged' kind recalls his image so vividly, and his dear words of sympathy and approval. How could I please him more were he alive, or more if he be cognizant of what is passing, than by endeavoring to please God in seeking the welfare of those forlorn lambs of our Master!"

"*June 1st, Sunday* (1851).—Received at half-past five this morning intelligence of my father being dangerously ill.

"*June 2d, St. Giles's.*—My father died this morning at seven o'clock, having suffered no pain, but unconscious to the last. . . . Now I enter on a new career, one to which I am little adapted. Parliamentary business and city duties are my calling. How can I, at fifty years of age, learn other things? Land, rent, etc., are as Arabic to me. But the issues of life and death are in the Lord's hand. He, therefore, has determined; and my prayer now is that he will sanctify it to me, and that, whether high or low, rich or poor, conspicuous or obscure, I may do his blessed will, serve my generation, and then fall on sleep.

"*June 6th, St. Giles's.*—Ah, my poor father! I bless thee, O Lord, that I was here to say 'Lord Jesus, receive his spirit,' and close his eyes. (Kissed yesterday the lips of darling Minny's bust, the bust of my precious wife in her youth and beauty, but just as beautiful to me now, though twenty years have passed.)"

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE STUDY OF BIRDS.

I am glad to see that this growing interest in bird-life has reached our schools and is being promoted there. I often receive letters from teachers touching these matters. A teacher in the State of Delaware wrote me

that he and his pupils were trying to know all the birds within a mile of their school-house. One species of bird had puzzled them much. The teacher frequently saw the birds feeding in the road in the evening as he walked home from school. Then, when the blizzard came, they approached the schoolhouse for crumbs, sometimes in loose flocks of a dozen or more.

This is the teacher's description of the bird: "The upper half of its bill is dark, and about one-third on the tip of the lower. The rest is light. The feathers are a greenish-yellow below the bill, and the throat feathers are black with white tips. The belly is white, but the feathers are black underneath. In size it is a little smaller than the robin. It has a chirp, when flying, something like the cedar-bird. The back toe is certainly very long for so small a bird."

Had not this description been accompanied by a wing, leg, and tail of the bird in question, I should have been at a loss to name it. One of the birds was found dead in the snow beneath the telegraph wires, and this afforded the samples. It proved to be the prairie horned lark, one of our migrants, which passes the winter near the snow-line in the Southern States and the summer in the hilly parts of New York, New England, and Canada.

The above description makes the bird much too large, as its size is much nearer that of the bobolink and the bluebird. All the larks have the hind toe very prominent. This species, like the true skylark, is entirely a terrestrial bird, and never alights upon trees. When singing, it soars and hovers high in air like the skylark; but its song is a very crude, feeble affair in comparison with that of the latter. Its winter plumage is far less marked than its summer dress. One day I took note of one singing above my native hills, when it repeated its feeble lisping song one hundred and three times before it closed its wings and dropped to the earth precisely as does the European skylark.

Another teacher writes me asking if the bluejay eats acorns. She is sure she has seen them flying away from oak-trees with acorns in their beaks, and yet some authority to whom she had appealed was doubtful about their eating them. It is quite certain that jays eat acorns, but they carry away and hide a great many more than they eat. The thieving propensity of the jay, which is a trait of his family, the *Corvidæ*, leads him to carry away chestnuts and acorns and hide them in the grass and under leaves, and thus makes him an unsuspecting instrument in the planting of forests. This is the reason why, when a pine or hemlock forest is cut away, oaks and chestnuts are so likely to spring up. These nuts can be disseminated only by the aid of birds and squirrels.

A clergyman writes me from a New England town of something he found in his winter walks that puzzled him very much. It was an old cocoon of the *Cecropia* moth, in which he found two kernels of corn. What creature could have put them there, and for what purpose? Of course it was the bluejay. He had hidden the corn in the same blind way that he hides the acorns. I have seen jays in winter carry away corn and put it into an old worm's nest in a wild cherry-tree, and drop it into knot-holes in the tree trunk. It is doubtful if the jay can digest corn swallowed whole. It is too hard a grist for his mill. He will peck out the chit or softer germinal part, as will the chickadee, and devour that.

Another teacher wrote me that two pretty birds, strangers to her, had built their nest in a pear-tree near the kitchen door of the house.

They were small and slender, the male of a ruddy brown, his head, tail, and wings black and the female yellowish-green, with darker wings. The male brought worms and fed his mate while she was sitting, and seemed the happiest bird alive, save when the kittens romped about the door, and then, even in the midst of his cries of alarm like a blackbird's, he would burst out with glad notes of rejoicing, a song to her ear like a sparrow's. Soon there were young in the nest, and the air was filled with constant fluttering of wings and the rapturous song of the father. But, alas! one morning found the nest rifled of its treasures, and only the silent, miserable male flitting in and about the home in the most heart-broken fashion. A red squirrel or a cat or an owl had done the mischief. The nest was woven of hemp and grasses, and was suspended from the fork of a limb. The teacher guessed rightly that the bird was a near relative of the Baltimore oriole. It was the orchard oriole, a much rarer bird and a much finer songster. The song is not like the sparrow's, but much louder, stronger, and more ecstatic. The male does not get his full uniform of black and bay till the fourth summer.

A college boy once wrote me that he had

seen a mother oriole fall down dead when her nest was being robbed. The nest was in a large sycamore about twenty-five feet from the ground. An old Frenchman living near wanted one of the eggs for his collection. He procured a long pole, armed with some sharp nails on the end, and from the top of a small building under the tree tried to cut off the nest from the branch. The mother bird kept place within until it began to yield before the assault. Instead of eggs, the nest held young birds. When one of them fell out, the mother bird flew down and screamed around it in great excitement. Before the man could loosen his pole from the nest, all the young birds had fallen to the ground. The mother was darting and screaming about them, when suddenly she fell to the ground dead, a victim, no doubt, to her excessive emotion of grief. Birds are very delicate, high-strung creatures, and probably die of apoplexy or heart failure as frequently as human beings.—*"Far and Near," John Burroughs.*

LETTERS OF A SISTER.

To her Brother, James Freeman Clarke.

NEWTON, March 3, 1836.

My dear James,—Before you read any further, I wish you would take that double letter you spoke of and run to the office with it, and, when it is fairly mailed, you may sit down quietly and finish this letter. I am very glad you had such complete success at Mobile; but I expected nothing less, it seemed to be so borne in upon your mind, from the first mention that was made of it, that you should go and speak to those people. I do not know whether it was made known to you that you would have such a good time in other respects as appears from your letters you did have, but I shall give you credit for a single-minded intention. The fair creature you describe to me—I long to know more of her. It is a most winning picture, and our mother here thinks she has seen the original. I hope I am not mistaken in supposing that letter to contain more news of her. If you love me, do send it off at once,—that is, supposing you have neglected my first injunction.

I wrote you a letter and sent it, with "Channing on Slavery," by a private hand, which hand seems slow to deliver. The doctor wrote a part of the book while in Santa Cruz: he lived in Virginia two years. This I mention, because some people say he was never among slaves.

Mother brought several copies of the January number, and the Curtises had theirs for the first time. I don't know if you have prepared a number for February. I liked your sermon extremely well, and so did many others. Mr. Bowditch thought nothing ever was so good. I think the *Messenger* is very spirited and interesting, and hope you will keep it up so. I shall send you all the things I can get for it, and you can use them or not as you please. Mother wrote you that Mr. —— did not pay Mr. M. till after she came home, and she had questioned him, and he had said that he had. That youngster is so far from being fit for a minister that he is not even fit for a layman, and he complained, too, to good Mr. Francis that he was not remunerated for his trouble, and they called here together, not expecting to see Mother, and Mr. Francis spoke right out to her about it, and Mr. —— looked confused, but could do nothing else but persist in the story he had previously told Mr. F.; and Mother questioned him till she made him confess that it was his own extravagance that made him come home poor.

Pray how do you pronounce and spell the name of Huidekoper? Is it three or four syllables? Mother wishes to know if Mr. H. has more children than the son and daughter that she saw in Louisville? Mr. B. is no great of a trumpeter. He has not said much about the Mobile affair,—at least I cannot hear that he has. Have you seen the Dean?

I have nothing to write you about, dear James: that is the cause of my silence. My mind is in a stagnant state, which I pray it may be soon delivered from.

Your affectionate sister,

SARAH.

When you are an old man, I want you to preach a sermon from this text, Rev. 21st chapter, 22d verse,—"And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." If you feel like it now, you need not wait.

APRIL 28, 1836.

My dear James,—I heard a very fine sermon last Sunday evening at Watertown, from Henry Hedge, from the text, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." It is the first sermon I have heard him preach that I could take in; but this could not fail to speak to every open mind, however un-

tutored in philosophy. It was illustrated by the doctrine of mutual attractions, and I think he said he took some of the things he said from the "Elective Affinities"; but it was deeply religious. He said afterward that he liked to preach that sermon because he *believed* it, and I thought there could be no better reason. He desired me to remember him to you when I wrote, and I thought at the moment it was quite worth while to write *on purpose*. There was one illustration so happy that I must tell it to you. To show that the love of God is little to us if it does not awaken our love, he said that the infant, disturbed by frightful dreams, was not relieved by his mother's bending over him with anxious love, "until he awoke and found himself in her arms"

I should like of all things to meet you at Niagara. . . . But when will you be there? and can you let me know exactly? There is a party going to leave Boston the 1st of June for Niagara, consisting of Dr. and Mrs. Follen, Miss Martineau, and perhaps Miss Sedgwick, *but also* Mr. and Mrs. Chapman and Mr. and Mrs. Ellis Gray Loring, noted Abolitionists; and the whole party being of the same sentiments, and it being very well known that no Abolitionist can talk about any other subject for five minutes together, I fear I should be altogether an extraneous appendage. I think the pleasure of society consists in being called out in some way by the genial influence of your companions, and I am sure I should be only repressed by these, so I had rather not join them; and, if you will not be there till some time in July, perhaps I can find some other party to join. . . .

I am very glad to hear that you are in better heart and hope, and indeed I thought you would not be forsaken long. Farewell. Write me soon what you have decided upon.

Your affectionate sister.

MAY 7, 1836.

I am glad to tell you, dear James, how much I am pleased with your fearless notice of Dr. Channing's book. I was never so proud of you before, I assure you. I was much puzzled to know if you would say anything about it, for I did not know whether you would think it right to do so or not; but it seemed to me that you ought, and it gratified me to the heart that you did it in so unqualified a manner, more particularly as I was sure, if you should be assailed by a mob in consequence of it, that you would not hide yourself under a pile of shavings, but seize the opportunity of saying to the people what you wanted to. I have "obtained a hope" that Kentucky will get rid of her slaves first of all the States. Do not you think so? and, if you do, please write me so.*

I sent my piece about the *Messenger* to Mr. Walker, who returned it because as he said, having noticed the *Messenger* once, he could not spare any more room. And, as I can't submit to put it in the *Register*, I will do nothing more about it.

Yours ever,

SARAH.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Miss Kate L. Watson, Post-office Box 57, Worcester, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address *plainly* (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

It is too hot, this time of year, to play any very active games, or to perplex our brains with very intricate puzzles. So we will take the advice given by a wise writer, which we wish we had at hand to quote from, and, instead of fretting and fuming, and saying how hot it is, "sit down quietly and think of cool things." Let us think of an iceberg, drifting down from the north. Let us look up at the sky, and imagine that we are floating on a white cloud over the regions of eternal snow.

Do not editors make a mistake in giving seasonable articles, instead of using stories of arctic adventure in midsummer and stories of the tropics in the winter. We will give a menu for a cool July luncheon, and by way of table-talk, a few easy puzzles. If you cannot guess them, let them go, and wait till next month for the answers.

I.

Menu.

(*Not in French, but in pigeon-English.*)

De chin ce slick. Nslgefirlor
Mah San Dewshic
Cutt Lee
Monde Ale

* Alas! it was one of the latest to emancipate.

Ah! wet cresses! Del ala vas
Cur seb cum
Zen froid du ping. Lone mice
Rest vah bien lal
Eat dice

II.

Transposed Trees.

Let us rest for a moment under one of the following trees, or find seats in one of these shady groves, before trying the puzzles.

1. I am no lag.
2. A cat, pal.
3. Panes.
4. Charles.
5. Soak.
6. Spine.
7. Elm-sap
8. Chebe.

III.

FOR THE LITTLE ONES.

Five Little Pigs.

The first little pig went to market;
The fourth one stayed at home;
The second got into the butter;
The third in the night did roam;
For the fifth little pig, just look at you;
I am sure he is not in me.
Now tell me, you wise little guessers,
Who these piggies five may be?

—*K. L. W.*

IV.

The following anagrams all have the same solution, the name of a popular poem:—

Met A. at Horn's.
A rat shot men.
E. T. a short man.
That sore, man?
Tar, shoe, mart.
Shot a marten.
A monster hat.
Matt's roan, eh?

V.

Some Chinese Conundrums.

1. Why is a Chinaman like an author?
2. How has China been misrepresented by fame?
3. Out of what do the Chinese students at Harvard drink tea?
4. How many coaches are there in China?
5. If all the women went to China, where would the men go? —*Selected.*

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN JUNE NUMBER.

I. Robinson Crusoe (Crew so). 2. Sara Crewe. 3. Ivanhoe (I've an hoe). 4. Paradise Lost (Pair o' dice Lost). 5. Paradise Regained. 6. An Old Maid's Paradise.

II.—Persevere, ye perfect men;
Ever keep these precepts ten.

III.—An egg.

IV.—1. Sweet William. 2. Ivy geranium. 3. Alpine snow. 4. Iceplant. 5. Moss-roses. 6. Herb-robert. 7. Orange flower. 8. Field daisy.

V.—1. By planting them in the spring. 2. Because the day always breaks when it comes. 3. Paper is preferable.

THE SURGEON BIRD.

Two birds were building a nest under a gentleman's study window. He watched the birds. They brought round bits of wet clay in their bills, they stuck these bits upon the wall. After they had worked busily for a while, they would perch on a tree near by. There they would sit and look at the nest. Sometimes they would fly down and tear away all that they had built: sometimes a part of the nest would fall down. Then the birds would stop and think how to build it better.

Right in the middle of the work an accident happened. One of the birds stepped on a piece of broken glass: it cut her foot very badly. But Mrs. Bird was a brave little body. She wished to keep on with her work: she did keep on till she was faint and sick, and could not fly up from the ground. Then she lay down; she closed her eyes; she looked very sick. The other bird looked at her anxiously, then he turned around, and gave three loud, strange cries. Soon several birds came flying about to see what was the matter. A little surgeon bird came with them. He looked like the others, but he soon showed that he was a surgeon. He brought a bit of wet clay in his bill. He ground it fine with his own little beak, then he spread it on the bird's sore, stiff foot, just as a surgeon spreads a plaster. Next he took in his bill a long, green cornstalk, and flew up on a tin waterpipe under the window. One end of the cornstalk was near the lame bird. She took hold of it with her bill, and helped herself up on the water-pipe, too. Then he helped her into the nest.

Poor Mrs. Bird! It was very hard to be sick and to move into a half-built house. What do you suppose the little surgeon bird did next? He went to work and helped Mr. Bird finish the nest. Then he flew home.—*Sunday Afternoon.*

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The Editor calls attention to an important change in the list of the officers of the Cheerful Letter Exchange.

Our new Secretary is Mrs. Harris Kennedy, Readville, Mass.

Until further notice the begging letters, formerly sent to Miss Langmaid, may go to our Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.

The Cheerful Letter Exchange will arrange for lessons by correspondence in such subjects as are desired by those without school facilities, who would like to take up a course of study in this manner. It is believed that much practical help can thus be given.

Will those who would like to receive such instruction send their requests to Mrs. C. L. Stebbins, 52 Fayette Street, Cambridge, Mass., stating the subjects in which they wish instruction?

Miss L. Freeman Clarke regrets that she has not yet been able to obtain enough copies of "Stepping Heavenward" to respond to all the requests received for that book. In the course of time she will, no doubt, be able to do so. Meantime she will send one or two at a time, whenever she is able to procure them.

The Editor also thinks it desirable to repeat the notice given in the last number, in regard to the importance of sending a card to Mrs. Nichols, before sending a book, in answer to a request, printed in the Book Club. If you see a request for "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and own a copy, do not send the book at once. If six persons do this, five copies of "Uncle Tom" are wasted. Many of our workers understand this, and follow the rule; but some, probably new members, still send off a book without consulting Mrs. Nichols, and thus waste their literature.

In sending requests or offers of books, it is essential to address these communications to the *Book Club* (Secretary Mrs. W. B. Nichols). If addressed to the Editor these letters are in some cases postponed; in others altogether omitted. See directions in every number of *The Cheerful Letter*.

PLEASE REMEMBER, WHEN YOU SEE A REQUEST FOR A BOOK IN THE BOOK CLUB, TO WRITE A CARD TO MRS. NICHOLS, ASKING, "*Shall* I SEND SUCH A BOOK TO SUCH A PERSON?" BEFORE SENDING IT, ELSE THE PERSON WHO REQUESTS IT MAY RECEIVE SEVERAL COPIES. WHEN ANY ONE WRITES DIRECTLY TO YOU, ASKING FOR A BOOK OFFERED BY YOU, SEND A CARD TO MRS. NICHOLS, SAYING THAT YOU *have* SENT IT. WHEN YOU RECEIVE MORE REQUESTS THAN YOU CAN MEET, SEND THESE TO THE BOOK CLUB.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our Book-Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of an instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable. Do not offer odd numbers of periodicals, but send them directly to one of the many stations where they are acceptable.

DIRECTIONS.

SECRETARY,—Mrs. Harris Kennedy, Readville, Mass.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY,— Miss Frances B. Fisher, 491 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

EDITOR,— Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,— Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,— Mrs. Charles T. Catlin, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Checks should be made payable to Mary Louise Catlin.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Mrs. Catlin at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Mrs. Catlin, as above. Please give full name and address. Also send name of minister as reference. Some of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.